THE

PRIMITIVE CHURCH

(OR BAPTIST)

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Essays, Expositions, &c.

ON RELIGIOUS DECLENSION.

It will not be matter of doubt, with the thoughtful and intelligent of your readers, that the state of religion in this kingdom, and the spiritual condition of the professed Church of God in these realms, are by no means healthy. It is difficult to form an accurate opinion of the Episcopal community. Externally there is great activity, and at no period of its history have the members of that sect been more laborious and earnest in their work. This is true of the two great classes into which the ministers, for my present purpose, may be divided —the Evangelical and the Puseyite portions. Differing widely as the poles, from each other, on many important Christian verities, they are, nevertheless, putting forth an amazing amount of energy in their spheres of labour. No means are wanting, which wealth, learning, self-denial, and appeal to the highest, and, yet, the lowest motives, can supply. Still of the result of these vast agencies we are comparatively ignorant. We can obtain only the smallest data on which to base our opinions. Into the church, within the church, we are not permitted to look.

Judging of the various Nonconformist bodies, from some aspects which they present, the judgment would be in favour of the present, in comparison with any period of their past history. Everywhere gorgeous structures are rising, rivalling the Episcopalian or the Romanist in the order of their architecture and the loftiness of their spire. The costly organ, the selected choir, chanting God's praise to the great gratification of the silent worshippers, the crowded and gaily-dressed audiences, the social position, the accumulated wealth of many of the members, and the munificence, in many cases, with which many of our religious enterprises are sustained, impress the mind, and frequently captivate the judgment.

Looking at these, and other external characteristics, the decision would be favourable in the highest degree. But we should never confound the accidental with the essential, the indirect results of Christian truth with the certain and the spiritual. Christianity has frequently, we say not always, been most powerful, its influence the most elevating and sublime, its fruit the most abundant and matured, when all these have been wanting. Like the violet, which sends forth the richest perfume when crushed by the foot of the traveller,

piety has shone with the clearest light of the Eternal, and unfolded most of the spirit of the Master, when the hand of the oppressor has sought to crush out its life. The majestic oak is nursed by the winter's blast. The constant exposure to a tropical sun, would, probably, soon change its nature. The barn, the hill-side, and the secluded wood, have witnessed more devotion and truer piety, than the splendid cathedral; the humble cottage, than the palace of mitred prelates. The sepulchres of the prophets may be garnished with costly materials, while the inside are full of the elements of a loathsome corruption.

With the imposing grandeur of the external and material, we must place in contrast two other things, viz.—the rate of increase, and the moral state of the church. Dwelling for a moment on the first. That the gospel is the great and the chief instrument by which men are to be converted and the world evangelised, none of your readers will probably dispute. Separate from the ministry, and the influence of the truth, presented in some other modified form, we have no right to expect accessions to our churches. It is by the truth, and only by the truth of Jesus, that men can be brought to know him, whom to know is life eternal. This stands alone in all its imperial grandeur and commanding importance, as "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes." Nothing else but Christ crucified can be the staple of the gospel. There may be eloquence the most impassioned, learning the most profound, arguments irresistible from their truth, but if they are not imbued with and steeped in the doctrine of the cross, men may admire, but they will not believe; the preacher may be applauded, but the Saviour will be dishonoured. The shadow of the human will be thrown over the cross, not the glory of the cross absorbing the presence of the human. Besides, in this view, we must remember that ministers and teachers exist in vastly-increased numbers, in mental power, in social position, and in rich and varied culture. Our auxiliaries are multiplied; the Bible is everywhere; our tracts, scattered by millions through the length and breadth of our land, are full of the saving verities of Christ's holy gospel; the youth of both sexes are gathered from Sabbath to Sabbath, by the rising piety of the church, and their young minds are made familiar with the truths of the oracles of God; whilst the masses of depravity, festering in the dark alleys and cellars of our large cities and towns, are penetrated by the noble and heroic under the name of city or town missionaries. These are only samples. They could be multiplied greatly. But they are enough for my purpose. We have had nothing like it in the past. Our forefathers knew them not. Alone, comparatively, they stood in the great conflict.

But the question returns, What is the result of this increased and improved agency? I would not undervalue the smallest. The salvation of a single soul is of incalculable value. It would be a glorious recompence for a life of toil and of self-denial. But this is not the ground on which we must dwell. Are the results, we would ask again, at all corresponding with the agencies employed? Are the additions to our churches such as we are warranted to expect? such as should satisfy the minds of the holy and the spiritual? Don't limit the inquiry to ourselves. Extend it to every section of the church, the numerical increase of which is known. For example, the various sections of the great Wesleyan family may supply us with facts. The minor ones are feeble. Their clear increase is small. The larger body is just now in session. Its returns, though imperfect, are now before us. They are startling and afflicting. In its mission field the decrease is nearly 3000. At home, with its vast agencies penetrating our hives of industry and the rural districts of the country, only 285 circuits show any increase, and 284 a decrease. The clear increase is about 1100.

The increase in our own body, according to the last "Handbook," was only 1¾ per church. True, this is for last year. The present one is not yet within my reach, but, judging from the returns as reported at the various associations, the facts are not more satisfactory. Here and there are cheering exceptions; but no one can be familiar with the condition of our churches, and the results

of our varied agencies, without feeling that their state is far from healthy, and that the mass of depravity around us is untouched to a great extent by them. Nor is there much ground to hope that these are exceptional cases. The evidence rather is the contrary. Feebleness marks all sections of the church in this country. It is true, statistics are not always safe. They afford us no just criterions of the real moral condition of a Christian community. All the higher elements of the Christian life may be cultivated, while the additions to the church are small. Many of the great ends of the Christian ministry must not be measured by numbers. The growth, the maturity of Christian character, must not be overlooked, and when this is realised, one great and noble purpose of the ministry is secured. "*He gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*" But what is the fact? Can we look with complacency on the internal state of the church? Is the holiness, the spirituality, the faith, the devotedness and prayerfulness of it of a high and commanding order? Does the truth of God exert that influence in purifying the heart and moulding the character as it ought? Is it not rather a theory than a power? Is the distinction between the church and the world as clear, broad, and attractive as the will of our Lord demands? Do we witness the profound sorrow, the self-abasement, the confession, which a sense of failure should inspire? or that intense and quenchless sympathy with the guilty around us, which a sense of their danger and infinite loss should enkindle in the mind? We might multiply these questions greatly, and put them in a variety of forms. But these are enough for our present purpose. But what answer can we give to them? What shape shall the reply assume? This subject is a very grave one, and must be approached in a spirit of enlightened calmness and profound submission to the Divine Word. By that law we must be guided, and to that test we must bring every opinion we may offer. Ignoring, then, as far as possible, whatever may be regarded as merely temporary and exceptional in the present condition of the church, there are some aspects in which its moral state may be viewed which will admit of no division of opinion.

Let us glance for a moment at our social gatherings for prayer! Do we find in these hallowed meetings the majority of the membership of our churches? Are a tithe of those who hear us ever found at the meetings for prayer? Are they sought as a means of vast and varied spiritual improvement, occasions of Christian fellowship, and of united prayer to our common Father for the prosperity of the whole? These inquiries will receive but one reply. The hundreds which hang on the lips of the Christian minister, with apparent delight, on the Sabbath, supply but a small number when God has to be sought and the presence and living power of the Divine Spirit to be implored. We could crowd these pages with facts of the most affecting character. True it is, there is no law in the New Testament on this matter, and many may plead its absence as a justification of their own conduct. But the fact of their doing this, is the clearest proof that either the head or the heart, or both, are in a fearful condition. We want no positive law to tell us we must breathe the pure atmosphere if we would have vigorous health. We want no written record to command us to eat. Nature is a law unto herself. So it is here. The craving of the soul should only be satisfied here. The first prompting of the heart should find satisfaction and delight here. The existence of this spirit, not as it marks the individual, but as it pervades the whole church, is the barometer which indicates its moral state, the index by which the degree of its spiritual life may be known. We may possess everything else, external and sensuous, the imposing and worldly in the ceremonial, but if this spirit of social and united prayer is wanting, the great element of spiritual progress is wanting, the chiefest channel of light and truth is neglected in our midst. Truly, as Montgomery said,

"Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air.

"The saints in prayer appear as one
In word, and deed, and mind:
Whilst with the Father and the Son,
Sweet fellowship they find."

Again. *Devotedness to Christ is never manifested by mere imagination, so much as by action.* The latter is always the characteristic of life. In every varied form it unfolds its power. We judge of its vigour by the effort it puts forth. 'Tis so with the spiritual. Devotedness to Christ is the free, the natural manifestation of its existence. In no other way can it find expression to its gratitude, its love, its holy sympathy with the Saviour, its hatred to sin, and its aspirations after the spiritual and the heavenly. It needs no law to enforce it. The ruling passion is indicated by Paul—"*The love of Christ constraineth us.*" "*For me to live is Christ.*" "*Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and esteem them to be refuse, that I may gain Christ,*" &c.* But is this spirit realised by the mass of the membership of our church? If so, to what extent? let me ask. Do we see them in the school, training the mind and moulding the character of the rising youth, imbuing them with holy principles, and enlisting their sympathies with the house of God and the great verities of the gospel? Or do we see them scattering the tract by the wayside, or carrying the Book of God to the poor and the ignorant? Or do we see them with glowing zeal, and as messengers of light and peace, penetrating the dark and dreary wastes around them, where sin luxuriates in all impurity and darkness, and crime and sorrow revel in unbroken fellowship? Or do we see them unfolding the attractions and self-denying power of fraternal affection in their visits to the afflicted, and throwing the charms of their tenderness around the last moments of the dying? Or do we—but enough! There are a thousand channels open through which our devotedness may flow; a thousand ways through which every talent may find its appropriate manifestation. It would be idle to doubt the existence of life; still worse to question the devotedness of many. But as to the mass? They have life, but it is not seen in action; they have life, but it is that of the recluse and the dreamy; they have life, but it is only that of the sickly or the cripple, not the energy and influence of the strong, of the manhood of the Christian character. We speak to wise men. Judge ye what we say.

We may mark, for a moment, the social life of multitudes! To analyse the whole, would be to trespass on your space more than I have any right to do. I must limit the circle of my remarks. I shall only deal with realities, not with opinions; place facts before the reader from which he may draw his opinion, rather than trouble him with those of my own. I might enter the dwellings, mark the luxury of their garniture, the richness of the fare, and the habit and style of life. I might mark the dress, the costliness of the material, the conformity to fashion, the rivalry it calls forth, and the influence it exerts. I might look at the taste and the character of the things which gratify them. The theatre and the ball-room are not yet crowded by many professing Christians, though some even grace these by their presence; but the concert, and the private or family-ball, as it is called, and many and varied sources of purely sensuous gratification, are hailed with rapture, and are enjoyed by thousands with delight. I stop not to mark the influence, and frequently the disastrous consequence to character, to reputation, and to the future social state of families. Oh! how ruin, in more ways than one, have resulted from this life, shall I say, of Christianised dissipation and baptised worldliness! These evils touch all circles; the lowest as well as the highest; the working girl, as well as the one whose life has been nurtured in the lap of affluence and ease. Conformity to the world is too obvious.

I am not morose. I would recognise the life of true piety as the most gladsome and happy. I would gather around it the pure, the beautiful, and

* Phil. iii. 8. *Vide* Alford.

the good. I would condemn no amusement, innocent in the abstract, but equally so in the enjoyment. I would lay universal Nature under the largest contribution, and withhold nothing which her sister Art could supply, ennobling to the mind or elevating to the heart. If any one has within his reach the elements of true pleasure, it is the man of God; and he is forgetful of his true mission, and ignorant of his high calling, who does not diffuse around him joy and gladness in the circle in which he moves. But are these characteristics of social life the true source of our happiness? I know the arguments by which the expenditure of wealth is thus justified. The theories of political economists I am not about to question. I leave them untouched. I wish to regard these social habits in another light. It is the feeling which prompts them, the delight which is gathered from them. It is the making of them the manifestations of our pride, and the source of our chief delight. Pitiable must the professor be who thirsts for them, and finds his greatest satisfaction in their pursuit and their possession. This feeling, where it is found, in the circle of the poor or the rich, in the minds of the ignorant or of those of rich and varied culture, impairs the spiritual life of the individual, and, as it pervades a Christian community, marks the life of the church.

I could enter upon other aspects, but my paper is full. These will amply serve my present purpose, and as the evils upon which I have touched exist, more or less, in most churches—for they meet us everywhere, and stand before us in every circle—so they must be regarded as the signs of our weakness, and the proofs of our decay. Perhaps in another paper you will allow me to touch on some of the causes which contribute to this state of things.

S——, August 15th, 1865. N. S. H.

THE JOY OF HARVEST.

The minds of men are as diversified as their countenances. Hence their pursuits, their sorrows, and their pleasures, are diverse also. In a world inhabited by individuals of opposite tastes, it is reasonable to expect the existance of many kinds of joy. And how completely is this expectation realised. In one part of the earth there may be enjoyed the felicity of peace, when busy looms and happy homesteads make the people glad; and, at the same time, in another part, may be heard the exultation of war, the mad revelry of carnage,

"The wild joy of warriors going to die,"

amid the clash and clang of arms, and "confused noise, and garments rolled in blood." In the same community may be found the maniac mirth of the bacchanalian, and the calm complacency of the man of sober habits. And—alas, for poor fallen humanity!—the selfsame person may, at different periods, experience ennobling aspirations of soul, and debasing gratifications of body.

Further, we may remark, that every season presents us with its own distinctive source of happiness. Day, as it bathes in silver light the awakening earth, and Night, with her swarthy brow jewelled with stars—each, in turn, thrills our souls with gladness; whilst the sweet blush of Spring, the glowing hues of Summer, the rich and mellow tints of Autumn, and the snowy robes of Winter, all enkindle in our breasts their peculiar sensations of delight.

At the present time, there is one joy to which our thoughts cannot but revert, namely, the joy of harvest; the joy occasioned by the ingathering of golden crops; the joy which takes possession of our hearts, as we see the well-plied sickle flashing in the sun, and behold the loaded wain's broad wheels press heavily the stubbled ground; the joy that fills our minds when the cornucopia of Plenty is emptied upon the jubilant fields; when the year is crowned with goodness, and the paths drop fatness; when the shouts of the reapers reach us from the distant plains, and the mingled voices of merry childhood and garrulous old-age are borne upon the breeze, as the gleaners gather

up the fragments of the precious grain. Oh, where is the heart that is not glad at such a time as this!

"What joy in dreamy ease to be
Amid a field new shorn,
And see all round on sun-lit slopes
The piled-up stacks of corn;
And send the fancy wandering o'er
All pleasant harvest-fields of yore.

. . . . . .

"Oh, golden fields of bending corn,
How beautiful they seem!
The reaper folk, the piled-up sheaves,
To me are like a dream;
The sunshine, and the very air,
Seem of old time, and take me there."

Our fancy now wanders into the far-off past. We stand beneath an eastern sky. The steaming earth is still moist with the recent deluge. On Ararat's rude slopes, we see, resting its cumbrous length, the ark of Noah, while, at a little distance, the curling smoke of his sacrifice ascends, as "a sweet savour," towards heaven.

Fancy is back again. Now, as we gaze around upon the joyous scene, every sheaf stands forth a witness to the immutability of Jehovah's counsel, and the unchangeableness of his designs. Every shock of corn proclaims His truthfulness. Every rustling ear is vocal with His praise. And, as about us the soft winds play, they seem to sing,—"*While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.*" (Gen. viii. 21, 22.)

Oh, how the evidences of Almighty faithfulness, as respects the past, should inspire us with renewed confidence for the future! He who has so signally kept His covenant with Noah, will also perform all the promises made to the people of his choice.

"Wide as the world is His command,
Vast as eternity his love;
Firm as a rock his truth must stand,
Till rolling years shall cease to move."

Like all other joys, the joy of harvest has its characteristics. Let us briefly glance at two or three of these.

This is *a nation's joy*. The failure of the harvest would, more or less, concern all classes, and, therefore, in the joy occasioned by its success, the entire population participates.

It is also *a social joy*. Parents and children, masters and servants, young and old, are alike interested in the fact, that the food of the future has, by a beneficent Providence, been vouchsafed unto them.

Moreover, we may remember, for our encouragement, that *it is a joy which follows labour*. Behold that mysterious workman, "walking with long strides across the furrows of the fields, and flinging into the air, with the gesture of a ruler, the germs, the seeds, the future harvests, the wealth of the approaching summer, our daily bread, the life of the universe. He goes backwards and forwards, he returns; his hand opens and empties itself, fills itself and empties itself again and again. The dark plain is moved; fertile nature receives the secrets that are confided to its care; the dews fall; each grain drops trembling to the ground, and kisses the earth that receives it to its bosom; there is a promise of plenty that goes flying through the air, and the sun, hiding itself behind the horizon, looks lovingly on what the workman is doing, and knows that his labour will not be thrown away in vain. Sacred and mysterious work!"* Every thing which is really worth possessing in this world is the

* Victor Hugo.

result of toil—toil, either of brain or of muscle. Labour is the lot of all. Yea, even of God himself. How sublimely significant those words of Christ,—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Labour is Godlike. Workman, let this thought cheer thee at the bench; and thee, student, in thy study; and thee, pastor, in thy ministrations; and thee, Sabbath school teacher, in thy class. Let no man shrink from honest work. "The harvest crowns the spring."

The joy of harvest is frequently preceded by suspense. How anxious is the yeoman about his seed, about his ground, about the weather, and about many other things, which, directly, or indirectly, have to do with the prosperity of his crops. Spiritual husbandman, so should it be with thee. Thou shouldest watch, with deepest anxiety, for every appearance of the Divine blessing upon thy endeavours to benefit the souls of thy fellow men.

Finally, *the joy of harvest should be the joy of gratitude.* Looking upon well filled barns, we may ask ourselves the question, "What have we that we have not received?" All our exertions would have been in vain, had "He that sitteth in the heavens" withheld his smile. While engaged in our various spheres of labour, let us be mindful of this fact,—"*God giveth the increase.*" Surely then the joy of harvest should be the joy of gratitude. "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

Hillmorton, Rugby, September, 1865. J. W. Cole.

CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLE AND WORLDLY POLICY.

A controversy has now for some time been going on in "The Primitive Church Magazine" in reference to the Baptist Church at Coleraine. Upon the main features of that controversy I have nothing to say, but the following remarks struck me very forcibly. "Mr. Brown asks on what principle one agent could get £200 per annum, while another would get only £60. Surely this question hardly requires an answer. Every man should be paid according to his ability and work." (P. C. M. for Sep., p. 204.) This appears to me to be so contrary to the spirit of the gospel, and savours so much of a worldly policy, that I am led to doubt if any true prosperity can attend any church or minister acting upon such a principle. Is it in accordance with 1 Peter v. 2, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind." Paul's direction both to Timothy and Titus is to the same effect. (1 Tim. iii. 3; Titus i. 7.) Only think of the apostle Paul soliloquising with himself to the following effect:—"I am a man of much learning; I am deeply instructed in the sublime truths of the gospel, and am capable of writing some things which my brethren in the ministry find it hard to understand. All the churches are desirous of having me. I shall not think of going to that church at Smyrna. I know its poverty. (Rev. ii. 8.) Certainly, there is no fault to be found with the church itself; but I shall go and take the oversight of the church at Laodicea, for they are rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." No, that is not like him. But, on the contrary, he said, "I have coveted no man's silver or gold" (Acts xxii. 33)—"I would rather labour, working with my own hands, that I might not be chargeable to any." (2 Thes. iii. 8.) And the apostle declares he did this not because he had not the power, but to set an example. (2 Thes. iii. 9.) Alas! where is the spirit of the apostles to be found in our days? where is there faith in that God who has said, "Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." (Matt. vi. 31.) When a minister thinks of removing, the question should not be, "Where can I get the largest salary?" but he should ask the Lord to direct him to some place where he can be made the most useful,

patiently wait to see the Lord's hand in the matter, and then cheerfully follow where the Lord leads.

The affairs of our churches generally are conducted too much after a worldly principle. People and ministers are alike gone wrong. Thank God, we have some noble exceptions left. I know a good brother, a minister of the gospel, who never made salary a question. He has been over large churches, and he has been the pastor of very small and very poor ones. He is greatly respected, and his ministerial labours highly prized, by those who know him. When receiving a large salary, he had nothing over, for he gave much away; and when he had a *very small one*, he had no lack, for what was shortcoming from the people, the Lord supplied. I have known when at most he had not more than twelve shillings per week from the people; but, at that time, he had an abundance to supply his own wants, and some to spare to assist others who stood in need. (He had no private resources of his own.) I believe it to be a fact that, when he had the smallest salary, he had the most to spare. *He had faith in God.* I have heard him say, repeatedly, that when he needed any pecuniary supplies, he told the Lord about it, and he was *never disappointed*; and it had become such a habit with him, that he would rather procure his supplies from this source than any other, believing it "better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes." Although now an aged minister, he is still diligent in his work, acting upon the same principle, and receiving but a small salary, although many churches would give him a much larger one if they could procure his services.

A few weeks since I heard of a minister who received an invitation from a wealthy church. He felt it his duty to accept the invitation, but he could not be induced to receive a larger salary than that which he had received from his former people, lest it should be said that money had induced him to move.

These are the exceptions. Would to God they were the rule. The pastor's language should be, "Take all I have, all I am, and use me for the promotion of thy glory, and I will be content!" because "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your bodies and in your spirits, which are God's."

Whilst these thoughts were passing through my mind, I took up "Cheering Words" for this month (September), and read the following remarks by Mr. Crowther:—"I have always found sweet comfort from taking heed to the way in which I was first led to speak in the name of the Lord; and would always advise a man to know both who his employer and his paymaster is, before he commences work in the Lord's vineyard." It should be enough to hear our Lord say, "Go work in my vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive." How different this from the remarks made in the letter referred to. "One agent of the society, who was in receipt of £200 a year, was induced to give it up for a better place." Why not speak plainly, and say "*for better pay*"? How can we expect the blessing of the Lord when ministers and people proceed after this fashion! "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." It is time to speak when we see, not only in this matter, but in many other respects, a worldly spirit and policy taking such fast hold upon our ministers and people.

Downham, Norfolk. J. P. Bane.

[Whilst fully agreeing with the writer of the above in his condemnation of the worldly, avaricious disposition too often displayed in the conduct of professed ministers of the gospel, it should at the same time be remembered that churches possessing the ability, are *bound* by the law of the New Testament to render *adequate* support to their pastors. True, the apostle Paul did not "use this power" in his own case; nevertheless, he claims it on behalf of his brethren in the ministry of the word, for, says he, "Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." (1 Cor. ix. 14.) We fear that not a few churches are sadly remiss in their observance of this Divine command, as many poor, hard-working, faithful servants of Jesus Christ can testify.—Eds.]

Correspondence.

THE BAPTIST CHURCH AT COLERAINE.

To the Editors of the Primitive Church Magazine.

My dear Brethren,—It was my intention not to write another syllable on the above subject; but a letter in your last issue requires me to say a few words. I am indirectly charged with persecuting the church at Coleraine during a period of ten or twelve years. I might say that the persecution was on the other side; but assertion on *either side* would be of no use without proof. The only direct charge brought against me, is that of "grossly misrepresenting" the finances. In reply to this, I shall merely give the explanation over again which I have already given in the July number of "The Primitive Church Magazine;" but of which the minister and deacons take no notice whatever. In a previous number, I had stated that the minister's salary at Coleraine was £200 per annum, viz.—£100 from the church, and £100 from the Baptist Irish Society. In the June number, "Viator" admits the truth of that statement, at least in the case of *one* pastor who, he says, "from September, 1860, to September, 1862, received £200 a year;" bnt intimates that the present minister is not in the receipt of "anything like that sum;" and the official document in your last number states that Mr. Tessier has only £86 from the church, and £60 from the society. Now, as I said before, I went on the supposition that the salary continues the same, and that no change has taken place in finances, at least *for the worse*. I am now set right on this point, however; and if in anything else I am wrong, I shall be most glad to be corrected. I hope you will not consider an error, which most men would consider very natural, as an unpardonable sin. With respect to the letter of Mr. Groser, a late esteemed secretary of the Baptist Irish Society, I may say that I am almost sure he was not the man to be guilty of falsehood; but if he stated what was *not true*, it ought to have been contradicted *during his life*. The contradiction comes too late *seven years after his death*. As to the charges from which he, as secretary of the society, acquitted me, I still plead not guilty, and I am happy to believe that they are credited by none but the accusers themselves. The statements contained in Mr. Craig's pamphlet, generally, refer to certain practices existing in some of our churches, such as mutual teaching on the Lord's Day, weekly communion, the administration of the Lord's supper without a pastor, &c. These statements are given on the authority of several writers, who profess to have been eye-witnesses of those practices, and whose names are attached. For such statements, true or false, neither I, nor any one else, ought to be held accountable, except the writers themselves. But I leave the *well known* author of the pamphlet to defend himself and give the sources of his information. These are the only facts to which the letter alludes—on *its personalities* I shall not enter. It is my earnest prayer to God that the stumbling-block may be removed, and that Christian confidence and harmony may be restored.

Yours in Christian love,

John Brown.

Baptist Manse, Conlig, Newtownards, Sep. 6th, 1865.

[We have received two other letters on the same subject from "W. Craig" and "J. Young," but, as our readers will no doubt agree with us that quite enough has already been written on both sides of the question, we must request that its discussion in this Magazine do now close.—Eds.]

THE NAME CHRISTIAN, AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

To the Editors of the Primitive Church Magazine.

Sirs,—Having a love for the truth, and a dislike to error, and more especially with regard to Scripture, I take this opportunity of replying to one who signs himself, in your last month's Magazine, "A Christian Brother."

1st. He hopes that Mr. Spurgeon's example will be speedily imitated by persons of all denominations, viz.—a desire no longer to be called a Christian (God forbid that such should be). He goes on to say that it means nothing, and that it does not imply piety, and that it is given to men of no moral character. I find that the meaning of the word *Christian*, is a disciple of Christ, or Christ-like. If he will refer to Acts xi. 26, it says there that the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch. And why was that name given to them? Because they were the followers of Christ. Again, Acts xxvi. 28, "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." 1 Peter iv. 16, "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed," &c. Why should any individual who is a devout follower of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, refuse to be called a Christian? Is it because he is ashamed of religion, so as to refuse to suffer on account of it? Is it because he is afraid of being despised and maltreated? What is it that causes so many to say with king Agrippa, "*Almost* thou persuadest me to be a Christian"? 1. By the love of sin—the love of sin in general—some sin that they are not willing to abandon. 2. By the temptations of the world, its cares, its vanities. 3. The fear of shame, persecution, and contempt. 4. The love of office, &c. A man whose heart has been changed by grace from sin, and made a new creature in Christ Jesus, regards his religion as every way honourable. He is not ashamed to be called a Christian; he is not ashamed of the doctrine taught by his religion; he is not ashamed of his Saviour whom he professes to love; but says, with the poet,—

"Jesus! and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of thee?
Ashamed of thee, whom angels praise;
Whose glories shine through endless days!"

In reference to the Lord's supper, he says that the New Testament has left "When?" an open question, neither the Master nor his apostles having appointed any particular time, &c. We are told in Scripture that the churches are to maintain the weekly breaking of bread, commonly called the Lord's supper. The permanence of this sacred rite appears from the command of our Lord, "This do in remembrance of me" (Luke xxii. 19), which, when uttered, must have had a prospective reference. This command is twice repeated in the fuller account in 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25. The institution is to stand until the coming of Christ, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor. xi. 26.) This ordinance should be observed on every Lord's Day or first day of the week. "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread," &c. (Acts xx. 7.) In the apostolical churches the Lord's supper was a weekly festival, like the Lord's Day itself. (Acts ii. 42.) At this weekly celebration a collection was made, principally for the poor saints. (1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.) Paul had ordered this to be done in the churches of Galatia, and he enjoins it upon the church at Corinth. In addressing the church at Corinth, Paul speaks to all the members as receiving *both* elements. Thus, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew," &c. (1 Cor. xi. 26—28.) The church at Corinth had much abused this privilege, yet the apostle says not a word in either of his epistles to them about withholding the cup from "the laity." It is intended to be a standing memorial of His holy sacrifice, by which our faith shall be confirmed, and our love awakened. It assists faith, but does not overwhelm it by a scenic pageant. "Where?" and "To whom?" should the Lord's supper be administered. In the apostles' days, they broke bread from house to house, and, perhaps, in small companies, for the want of better convenience. They were persecuted and driven hither and thither, and had no certain dwelling-place; they worshipped God at the hazard of their lives; nevertheless they had their times of gathering together, hence it is recorded in Acts xx. 7, from which it appears

that they embraced opportunities of commemorating together the sufferings and death of Christ. In our day, the providence of God, and the laws of our country, protect us in our gathering together in our places of worship, and we can, as was figuratively predicted, "sit under our vines and fig-trees, none daring to make us afraid." The breaking of bread, or Lord's supper, was emphatically a church ordinance, and was never administered except when the church, as such, came together for the purpose. "What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not?" (1 Cor. xi. 22.) The Corinthians had destroyed the essential idea of the Lord's supper, which is that of an united participation by the whole church of one common feast, so that though they did come together into one place, as commanded by their Lord, they did not partake of one supper. From these observations we learn that it is unscriptural to break bread to *individual* Christians in the sick-chamber, besides being fraught with great peril of producing a superstitious reliance upon a mere ceremony. The Lord's supper is an ordinance peculiar to churches, as such, and should only be celebrated when the disciples come together into one place. Hence we perceive, too, that in apostolic days, submission to the ordinance of baptism invariably preceded admission to the Lord's table. Baptism was the badge of discipleship, and discipleship was an indispensable pre-requisite to the communion of the symbolical body and blood of Jesus. As the Lord's supper was confined to members of churches, and as baptism was necessary to membership, baptism must in all cases have preceded the enjoyment of a seat at the supper of the Lord. And what right have we to depart from this order? (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Mark xvi. 15, 16; Acts ii. 41, 42; Rom. xv. 7; xiv. 1—3.) Baptism certainly was not a doubtful disputation when the epistle to the Romans was written, nor is it really so now. Paul's observations in Rom. xiv. apply to things indifferent, and about which Christ has not legislated. But our Lord has legislated touching baptism, and henceforth it becomes no longer a thing indifferent, All the earlier Christians had been received into the church by that ordinance. In apostolic times all the members of the churches were first in the judgment of charity, born of the Spirit, and then born of the waters of baptism. (John iii. 5.)

In conclusion, I hope that our Christian brother will not be afraid (when he writes again) of coming out in his true colours upon the question of Open *v.* Close Communion. I myself prefer the latter before the former, believing that the former is altogether contrary to Scripture; and if time would have permitted, I should have gone more fully into the subject; but, being a working man, my time is fully occupied. Trusting you will think that this letter will prove beneficial to the readers of your Magazine, you will do me the kindness of inserting it in your next.

I remain respectfully yours,

THOS. OWEN CRUMPTON.

34, *Wharf-street*,
Wolverhampton.

[Our correspondent has evidently missed the point of "A Christian Brother's" argument in reference to the use of the term "Christian." By substituting the word "Christian" in the place of "Reverend," he endeavours to meet the objection made to the latter title by Mr. Brown in the preceding number of the Magazine, and observes that precisely the same objections—on the ground taken by Mr. Brown—may be raised against the use of the term Christian, as are urged by Mr. Brown against the term Reverend. As *commonly employed*, the term Christian is frequently applied to persons of even *immoral* character—all who are not *heathens* being regarded as Christians, so that the adoption of the term is not in itself any test of moral character. This is all that is maintained in the former part of the letter upon which our friend animadverts, and as the writer signs himself "A Christian Brother," it shows that he himself is not "ashamed" of the name.—EDS.]

Poetry.

THE MANCHESTER MUSICAL FESTIVAL, 1836.

To the Editors of the Primitive Church Magazine.

Dear Sirs,—The following Song, as the title indicates, was written on the Musical Festival held at Manchester, September, 1836. The object of the festival was to raise money for "the benefit of public charities." It was got up under the patronage of the King, Queen, and many of the nobility. There were nearly four hundred of the most celebrated performers engaged on the occasion. Among the pieces sung were the "Creation," "Messiah," and the "Last Judgment." The festival extended over four days. The performances in the mornings took place, at eleven o'clock, at the Collegiate Church; in the evenings, at half-past seven o'clock, at the Theatre Royal. It was opened by a dress ball, in the Assembly Rooms, on Monday evening, September 12th; and closed with a fancy dress ball, on Friday evening, September 16th, when the Theatre Royal, the Assembly Rooms, and the Church, were connected. In these circumstances this "New Song" was composed. It provoked the anger of those who promoted the festival. The *Manchester and Salford Advertiser* bestowed upon it a lengthened "leader" at the end of the festival week. But the editor evidently mistook the meaning and design of the song. It was, however, well received by the people. Many thousands were either sold or given away. It became a popular ballad, and was sung in the streets of Manchester and the surrounding towns. Vast numbers were thus sold. Children learned and sung it. "Creation," "Messiah," "Last Judgment," and "Ball," were for a time adopted as household words. Different gentlemen were named as the author, and in some circles conjectures were strongly in favour of the late William Gadsby. The fact of the case is that it was written by the late Joseph Harbottle, of Accrington. The rebuke it administered to the Musical Festival of 1836, is as applicable to the spirit and habits of the people in 1865. It is a common method to raise money for charitable purposes by means of "concerts," "balls," and "sports." I would submit to Christian people a consideration of these with the law of charity as laid down in the New Testament, and to the benevolent would suggest a comparison between the actual outlay in such cases, and the real profit derived from them. I will supply the figures in the present instance. The proceeds of the festival in question were announced at about £15,000, but only £4,230 is recorded as distributed among the public charities. Believing that many of your readers will be pleased with the poetry that comes from the pen of our late friend Mr. Harbottle, and deeming the piece not unsuitable to present times, I ask the kindness of insertion in the Magazine.

Haslingden, September 11th, 1865. I am, dear Sirs, yours truly, P. P.

A NEW SONG, COMPOSED FOR THE MUSICAL FESTIVAL AT MANCHESTER, 1836.

Ye people of Manchester, hear and be wise,
Let Babel's confusion astonish your eyes;
Behold the huge placards affix'd to the wall,
With "*Creation*," "*Messiah*," "*Last Judgment*," and "*Ball!*"

The musical festival now is at hand;
Performers engaged are the first in the land;
For the grave and the gay—for the great and the small—
With "*Creation*," "*Messiah*," "*Last Judyment*," and "*Ball!*"

The chiefs of the people their patronage lend,
And merchants, and tradesmen, and citizens blend;
When the sackbut shall sound, to the image they fall,
With "*Creation*," "*Messiah*," "*Last Judgment*," and "*Ball!*"

The *Church* and the *Playhouse* in marriage unite;
The bans are well publish'd, and who doubts their right?
The *clergy* will surely be prompt at the call,
With "*Creation*," "*Messiah*," "*Last Judgment*," and "*Ball!*"

Let the Whig and the Tory in harmony meet;
Let Churchmen and Infidels joyfully greet;
For music can soothe the rough passions of all,
With "*Creation*," "*Messiah*," "*Last Judgment*," and "*Ball!*"

Oh! Christian, if godliness dwell in thy breast,
Bewail thy religion, disgraced and oppress'd;
Canst thou tarry in Babel, in fetters and gall,
With "*Creation*," "*Messiah*," "*Last Judgment*," and "*Ball?*"

Ye stern Nonconformists, whose fathers have bled,
Be warn'd by the counsels and dust of the dead:
Shall your presence encourage the sin and the thrall,
With "*Creation*," "*Messiah*," "*Last Judgment*," and "*Ball!*"

Shall men the Creator and Saviour despise?
Are the terrors of judgment thus small in their eyes?
Do they treat them as sports, and then finish the whole—
To *crown the strange climax—a Fancy Dress Ball?*

But the day is at hand when creation must shake;
When the hearts of the captains and mighty ones quake:
Messiah despised, shall ascend the white throne,
And the scoffers that mock'd Him in agony groan.

Then the trumpet of judgment *new* music shall pour,
More deep than the bass in the festival hour;
And the shrieks of the damn'd, and their wailing shall swell,
A concert of *woe everlasting* in *hell.*

Creation abused, leaves a reck'ning in store;
Messiah insulted, is gracious no more;
And Judgment shall doom the ungodly to roll
In the *pit* of despair, as *their* Fancy Dress Ball.

Page for the Young.

HOW TO BEGIN.

THERE was a little boy one day coming from school, when he saw some wild roses growing by the fence at the side of the road. "Oh! these will please my mother," said he, so he threw down his books on the grass and commenced to pick the roses. He had gathered several beautiful ones, when in trying to break one stout stem, a thorn ran into his hand. He pulled it out, as he supposed, and then started for home. His mother was as pleased as he hoped she would be with the roses, and he thought no more about the thorn. But the next morning the place where it had been on his finger was red, and felt sore. He showed it to his mother, and she said, "Perhaps you did not get all the thorn out; let me take a fine needle, and try if the point of the thorn is there." "Oh no, mother," said he, drawing away his hand; "that will hurt me, and I know there is nothing there." So his mother put on a little piece of plaster, and he went to school. All day his finger pained him, and at night it was much swollen, but still he would not let his mother look for the thorn. And so his finger continued to grow worse, the pain became more and more severe, until his father took him to the doctor, who cut his finger with his lancet, and drew from it a little black speck, the point of the thorn which he had run into his finger days before. "There," said the doctor, "now your finger will get well, but with that little thorn there all the plasters in the world would not have cured it."

Now this is the way to cure a festered finger; first to remove the cause, and then the finger will get well.

Two little children had each a piece of ground given them to make a garden. They were delighted, and immediately went to their father's garden and picked roses and pinks and honeysuckles, and stuck them in the ground. Then what a gay, beautiful garden they had, to be sure, but when they came to it the next morning all the flowers were withered, and their gardens had lost their beauty. The gardener came along just then, and they told him of their disappointment. "Why," said he, "did you think flowers would grow without any roots? why they will wither in an hour or two. Let me put some rose-bushes

and pink-roots in your garden, and then you will have flowers which will last some time." You see these children did not know how to make a garden.

"My father has promised me a bright new penny, when he comes home to-night, if I will be good all day; and I mean to be," said Fred. So he sat down to read an interesting book, and for half an hour was as good and quiet as possible. Then he went to the nursery to play with his little brother. But there what a sight met his eyes! His beautiful new drum with a hole knocked in the side. Nurse had given it to his little brother to play with, and he had made the hole with the end of the poker. Fred forgot all about his penny then; he called nurse all sorts of names, and struck his little brother so that he screamed loudly, and his mamma came to see what was the matter.

Fred did not begin right to be good. He should have asked God to take all angry passionate feelings from his heart, for while there is sin in the heart it must show itself.

I have told these stories to teach you that you can no more be good children or do what is right, unless God changes your hearts, than the boy's finger could get well while the point of the thorn was in it, or the children's flowers grow and keep fresh without any root. Perhaps some day you may think you have been good, but if you will try to remember, you will find that on those days you had no particular temptation to do wrong; nothing happened to cause you to be angry or made you wish to be disobedient.

Thus you see the way to begin to do right, is to ask God to take away all sin from your heart, that is, to make you hate sin and love holiness. Then only, you may hope to please Him and keep his holy law. Besides this, each day you must ask him to give you his Holy Spirit, to keep you in the right way. For the flowers, even though they had roots, would wither and die without sun or rain; so, though you may have a new heart, yet you cannot do what is pleasing in the sight of God without the help of the Holy Spirit.

May every little child who reads this get this new heart which God has promised to all who ask him for it.

CONSIDER THE LILIES.

INDEED, we will, and because the Lord Jesus bids us to. In a corner of our garden we have a bed of the lilies of the valley. They love to grow by themselves. We do not find them in company with the rose, the queen of flowers, or following the "London pride," or climbing up in the world with the "morning glory." We should hardly know they were in bloom but for their sweet breath upon the air, for they hide away among the leaves. Push aside the leaves and you shall find the lovely flower looking as modest as can be. The very place where it grows teaches a lesson of humility; and the way it grows, shows the same meek and lowly spirit; for beautiful as it is, it hangs down its head as if it had nothing to be proud of. It keeps back, hardly looking up, content to be the sweet lily God made it, and nothing more. Humility is a lovely thing.

A rich uncle once came to see his nephews and nieces, and what pleased them, he brought a great many beautiful presents, which, when he took out, set them jumping with delight.

"Oh?" they shouted.

"I'll have this," cried one.

"I want that," cried another.

"Oh, give me this," shouted a third.

Each one setting up his or her claim in a noisy way, almost stunning poor uncle, who was a quiet man, and not used to noisy children; all but little Alice—she kept back, looking at the things with pleased eyes, but she never asked for anything.

"Why, little Alice, do you not want something? Your cousins will beg everything away from you," said one of the aunts who was present.

"Oh, I only want what uncle pleases to give me," modestly answered Alice.

Uncle heard what Alice said, and her spirit pleased him. He took up a beautiful basket and hung it on her arm. "There, my dear, that is yours," he said; and cousins said it was prettiest of all.

Reviews.

Nichol's Series of Commentaries. The First General Epistle of St. John the Apostle, Unfolded and Applied. By NATHANIEL HARDY, D.D. Edinburgh: James Nichol. London: James Nisbet & Co. Dublin: G. Herbert.

THIS is the fourth volume of Mr. Nichol's Series of Commentaries of the Puritan period. Mr. Nichol very wisely does not confine his publications to those of the men of the Puritan *Party*; but includes in his series the works of other great men of that *age*. Nathaniel Hardy was a native of London, and a student of Oxford University. In 1635, he passed his B.A. at Magdalene Hall; and in 1638, his M.A. at Hart Hall. In 1639, he was admitted to Priest's orders, and became incumbent of St. Dionis Backchurch, London, where he enjoyed a high reputation for the eloquence and popularity of his preaching.

He was at this time strongly inclined to Presbyterianism, if not a full-blown Presbyterian. But the negotiations between the Royal and the Parliamentary Commissioners, at Uxbridge, and the discussions which took place there on the respective claims of Presbyterianism and Episcopacy to the *jus divinum*, converted Nathaniel Hardy to Episcopacy. From that moment, this eminent divine became both an Episcopalian and a devoted Royalist. Dr. Henry Hammond's argument, at Uxbridge, effected this change.

Dr. Nathaniel Hardy did not hide his convictions during the time of the Commonwealth. He kept up a regular "Loyal Lecture," at which collections were made for the relief of the deprived clergy. On the death of Charles I., Hardy preached a funeral sermon, and "duly on the anniversary of the day on which the black scaffold was reared at Whitehall, the 'royal martyrdom' was commemorated and lamented in the church of St. Dionis by a High Church Episcopal clergyman, in the presence of a mixed congregation of Episcopalians and Presbyterians, the latter being the majority." And yet Dr. N. Hardy was never interfered with in these proceedings, but was allowed to retain his benefice unmolested; a fact which shows that the conduct of the Parliamentary party, and of Cromwell during the Protectorate, was really characterised by much moderation. The Expurgators never even attempted the removal of Hardy, because, though a devoted Royalist and Episcopalian, he was an earnest labourer in the Lord's vineyard, and abstained from any overt acts of rebellion against the civil authorities of the time being.

Dr. Hardy was one of the deputation sent by the city of London to invite Charles II., "the Nell-Gwynne defender of the faith for us all," back again to England. After the Restoration Hardy's advancement was rapid. He was confirmed in the living of St. Dionis; was made D.D. by the Oxford University; became Vicar of St. Martin's-in-the-Field, Westminster; Archdeacon of Lewes, and Dean of Rochester; and besides, Rector of Henley, Oxon. He was evidently on the high road to the Episcopate.

But his devotion to preaching and pastoral work never relaxed. The ministry of the word was his great vocation. He was cut down in the prime of his powers at the age of fifty-two, in the year 1670, and was buried in the chancel of St. Martin's Church.

The only work of Dr. Hardy, of general and lasting interest, was his exposition of John's First Epistle, which Mr. Nichol has now most judiciously republished. The work was never completed farther than the 28th verse of the second chapter of the Epistle. What was finished is, however, a very precious fragment. "We shall be greatly disappointed if our readers do not acknowledge that the sermons now presented to them are of great excellence. In matter, they are purely evangelical; in spirit, they are earnest and affectionate; in manner,

they are eloquent and impressive. They have been held in high repute by students for nearly two centuries; and the volumes containing them have long been eagerly sought after by book-collectors." The sermons of Dr. Hardy are of reasonable length, and are not encumbered by the endless divisions, and sub-divisions, and sub-sub-divisions, which were the literary fashion of the age. They are eminently readable and enjoyable by a modern public.

Dr. Hardy's theology is moderately Calvinistic. We give one extract as an illustration of his style and theology. The reader will be amazed to observe how thoroughly Dr. Hardy has anticipated the arguments and even the illustrations of many writers of subsequent days.

On 1 John ii. 2., "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." He says, "Christ's propitiation is sufficient, *as to its natural value*, for the sins of the whole world, comprising not only men but angels. There is no doubt *merit* enough in the blood of Christ to pacify God for the sins of devils as well as men; and the reason is plain, because the value of Christ's passion depends primarily on the dignity of the person suffering, so that the Person being infinite, the value of his passion must be infinite; and since an infinite merit can have no limitation, we may truly say, he is a propitiation sufficient for the whole world, containing as well spiritual, as earthly wickednesses: yea, not only for one, but a thousand worlds; yea, as many millions as we can imagine."

"It is observable in Scripture that some places speak of Christ laying down his life for the sheep (John x. 15), and giving himself for his church (Ephe. v. 25), and others of Christ's dying for all, and tasting death for every one. In one place he is called the Saviour of the body (verse 23), and in another, the Saviour of the world (John iv. 14). Nor will it be hard to reconcile these, if we distinguish of a *general* and *special* intention in God, *that* the fruit of his *philanthropia*, love to mankind, *this* of his *eudokia*, goodwill to some particular persons. By the former, he intends Christ's propitiation *applicable to all*; by the latter, *he decreeth it to be actually applied to some*. According to this it is that St. Ambrose saith, Christ suffered generally for all, and yet specially for some," and Peter Lumbard, "Christ offered himself on the altar of the cross for all, as to the sufficiency of the price; for the elect only, as to efficacy, because he effects salvation only for them that are predestinated."

"Suitably, hereunto, it is that divines conceive a double covenant to be intimated in Scripture—the one universal and conditional, the other special and absolute; the one made with all and every man, upon these terms, whosoever believeth in Christ shall not perish (John iii. 16), the other made with Christ concerning a seed which, he should see upon making his soul an offering for sin (Isa. liii. 10), to whom he promised not only salvation by Christ upon condition of believing, but the writing his law in their hearts (Heb. x. 16), whereby they are enabled to perform the condition, and so infallibly partake of that salvation. By all which, it appeareth, that notwithstanding God's special affection, and decree of election, whereby he hath purposed this propitiation shall be actually conferred upon some, we may truly assert — God hath a general love whereby he hath ordained the death of Christ an universal remedy applicable to every man as a propitiation for his sins, if he believe and repent. And hence it is that this propitiation, as it is applicable so it is *annunciable* to every man."—P. 140, 141.

Now and then, too, the Doctor's High-Churchism peeps out; as for example in such cases as the following —"Christ is no doubt a propitiation for all *circumcised and baptised children*, dying in their infancy, who yet cannot actually believe in him."—P. 137. Notwithstanding these occasional blemishes, the volume before us is of high value. It contains an able defence of the evangelical view of Christ's death from the cavils of Socinus. It will be found very

helpful to every student of the sacred oracles, and we cordially thank Mr. Nichol for including it in this admirable series.

The Complete Works of Stephen Charnock, B.D. Vol. IV. Containing Discourses on the Knowledge of God; Unbelief; the Lord's Supper; &c., &c. Edinburgh: James Nichol. London: Nisbet and Co. Dublin: G. Herbert.

We have so recently expressed our opinions of Charnock as a Theologian (see "Primitive" for September), that it is not necessary to say much in introducing this fourth volume of his works to the notice of our readers. The longer we study the writings of this great man, the deeper becomes our conviction of their excellence. They are eminently suggestive. They contain some wonderfully striking thoughts, which might be made the germs of whole discourses. And, withal, there is such a majesty, such a calm and impressive stateliness, about his methods of stating truth, that he compels our respectful attention. Let the reader open any page of the volume before us, and he will find gems of thought sparkling everywhere. Take the following as an illustration:—

"God commanded that an ox, or lamb, or goat, intended for sacrifice, should be brought to the door of the tabernacle; not killed in the camp, or out of it;—if they did, he would count them guilty of blood, and esteem it no more than as a sacrifice offered to devils. The tabernacle being a type of Christ (Heb. ix. 11), this command signified that *whatsoever was offered to God out of Christ was of no value to him;* —as hateful as murder, and esteemed by him as if it had been offered to devils." P. 28. "Light and inconstant spirits have not the knowledge of God, *any more than running water can receive the force of a sunbeam*, which glides away from one after another, and remains under the power and force of none. You can never set a stamp upon a floating cork till you take it out of the water. Corrupt affections warp the understanding to irregular operations." Pp. 98, 99. "None can coin ordinances but Christ, and till he call them in, they ought to be current among us." P. 425. "At the time of his death, Christ manifested this voluntariness in his whole carriage. When the time drew near, He declined it not; he would enter Jerusalem with hosannas, as if when he went to his death, he went to his triumph." P. 548. "Christ's blood is like the rod of Aaron, always flourishing in the holy of holies before the mercy-seat. Aaron's rod flourished after Aaron's death; the sacrifice of Christ is always fresh," &c. P. 563. "In every pardoning act, God looks first with pleasure upon this victim, and dips his pen in the blood of it to blot out the iniquity." P. 586. "Many are like the Jews, to cry Hosanna when Christ rides in triumph; and presently after, when he is condemned, either fly from him or vote against him; like snakes that come out of their holes on a hot day to sun themselves, and at night retreat to skulk in their caverns." P. 598. "To be a friend of Christ in rags, is a greater honour than to be king of the whole world in purple robes." P. 595.

We trust our readers will not fail to possess themselves of this wonderfully cheap and beautiful edition of Charnock's Complete Works.

Spiritualism and other Signs. By E. S. London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co. Pp. 236.

This is an earnest protest against three great evils of the age, Spiritualism, Romanism, and Infidelity. It is evidently the work of a sincere, devoted friend of evangelical truth, who seeks to glorify the Lord Jesus, and to save souls. The book is enriched by numerous and lengthened quotations from our best writers, and will no doubt be interesting to many. The author, however, lacks literary experience and power. This is manifest from the frequent and needless digressions which enfeeble and disfigure these pages. Condensation, abbreviation, and a more logical and consecutive arrangement, would vastly improve the work before us. With this reservation we sincerely commend it.

The Higher Ministry of Nature. By G. S. Ingram. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row, E.C. Pp. 180. Cloth.

This deeply interesting work consists of Seven Lectures on the Bearing

of Creation on the Truth and Mission of Christianity. It is altogether a most interesting and refreshing little book, abounding with beautiful thoughts well expressed. It should become the pocket companion of all who visit the country or live there. It is a sweet reading of the evangelism of nature; one of the best little books of the day.

Difficulties of the Village Ministry. By the Rev. J. T. Brown, of Northampton. London: Elliot Stock. This is one of the papers read at the last session of the Baptist Union. It is a brief, but very interesting document so far as it goes, and should be widely circulated. Our Village Pastors do indeed need the sympathy and prayers of Christendom.

The Martyr President. A Sermon by Daniel C. Eddy, D.D. Boston, U.S.: Graves and King. This able and eloquent sermon was preached before the Baldwin-place Church, Boston, Mass., 16th April, 1865. It is a beautiful and glowing discourse on the death of the great and good President, Abraham Lincoln.

Honour to whom Honour. By the Rev. W. Isaac, of Ealing. Second Edition. London: Elliot Stock. A very useful manual of the duties of churches to their pastors.

We wish strongly to recommend the following by the same publisher:

The Sunday School Hymn Book. Ninetieth Thousand. One of the best of its class.

Stories for Sunday Scholars. No. 7. The First Sunday School. In verse, and very interesting.

We would also recommend the following new tracts by the Baptist Tract Society:

Elizabeth Ann Carson. Very suitable for distribution among children.

A Farmer's Odd-Man. A true tale of village life. By J. B. W.

The Life of a Young Actress. By J. B. W.

I have not been wicked enough for that.

The Bow Milkman. A Follower of Joanna Southcott.

A Baptismal Service. By Mrs. Oliver.

We have also received,

A Sunday School Dictionary. By William Parks, B.A. Second Edition. London: Collingridge, Aldersgate-street. Simple, but good, with the exception of such passages as the following: "Baptism.—1. Immersion, or washing, or sprinkling." P. 21.

Clifton Sermons; The Little Gleaner; and *The Sower.* London: Houlston and Wright, Paternoster-row.

Intelligence.

SAXONY.

My esteemed Brethren Howe and Parker,—"He went about doing good." This is the description which Peter gives us of the life of our beloved Saviour Jesus Christ. How short, but how comprehensive is this biography! and how useful has been that life which was spent in going about and doing good! The fruits of it are innumerable, precious, and eternal. And who can tell how much self-denial it cost our Saviour, continually, to "go about" in the wilderness of this world, and how great must have been the love which constrained him to "do good" to this crooked and perverse generation! As we are called upon to be his followers in every respect, so also in the way in which Jesus spent his life and strength—in his going about and doing good. There was labour, and there was love. Jesus laboured, and we know that he laboured with all his strength which he had as God and as man; he laboured with the effecting of our redemption much more than with the creation of a thousand worlds, and used *all* the power of his Godhead and manhood for our sakes. Concerning his love, we can only say

that, if the whole firmament were a parchment, all angels and all men writers, all boughs and all sticks pens, and the bottomless ocean the ink; the parchment were too small, the writers and pens not enough, nor the ink sufficient, to write the love of Christ!

Without enlarging upon this theme—for I have neither the ability nor the language for it—let me now briefly report what has been my poor efforts since I wrote you last. It is especially the missionary's calling and privilege to go about doing good; but in proportion as we are wanting the strength and love, in comparison to Jesus, so much we are behind this great model. However, praise be to Him that he has called us to follow after him, and bestowed upon us some strength and love to go about doing good.

At the end of June, when I wrote you last, I was at home, and, besides the conducting of the regular services, was busy in packing-up and sending to various places Bibles, Testaments, tracts, &c. They generally prove themselves to be good forerunners, and often prepare the way for my coming. The 1st of July, I went to Magdeburg, where we have about thirty members. On Lord's Day, the 2nd, we had, early in the morning, a blessed prayer meeting. In the service, afterwards, I preached on the "exceeding great and precious promises given unto us." In the afternoon, I went with a number of our brethren into the most populous streets and alleys to distribute tracts, and to take a number of cheap Testaments to the soldiers. In the second service, which was gathered by a number of strangers, I preached "the person, the work, and the love of Jesus," and, after this, we celebrated the Lord's death, at which we had sweet communion with him and with each other. In a church meeting we ordered some small church affairs, and a lovefeast kept us up till midnight. From Magdeburg I went into a quite different and far-off region, the farthest end of the provinces of Saxony—the neighbourhood of Torgan, a poor and despised part, generally called the Turkey of dogs. Here I had neither trains nor any conveyances, so that I had to make all the way by foot, which, with the great heat we had this summer, sometimes was rather wearisome. But also in this poor region the Lord has his people. In Torgan, for instance, I found eight Baptists, who did not belong properly to any church. They were somewhat like orphans or stepbrethren—no one looked after them—and so they went each one their own way. They had no regular services, nor the administration of the Lord's supper, but went occasionally to a meeting which was held by a Lutheran clergyman. I visited each one of them in their houses, and afterwards called them together to a meeting, told them how God is a God of order, and how everything, especially in his church, has to go orderly—that the church in Halle would readily receive them, and not omit to care for them in future. Then I ordered them regular services of their own on the Lord's Day, and appointed the oldest of them, a pretty well experienced man, to administer the Lord's supper when, at the time for it, I cannot be with them. In a letter from these brethren, which I received a few days ago, I hear that they greatly rejoice at the new order, and are getting on very well.

Travelling about in the neighbourhood day after day, I held meetings, not only in Torgan itself, but also in various other places, which mostly were crowded, and to which the Lord apparently granted his blessing. Coming into a neighbourhood in which I formerly occasionally preached the gospel, I had now the joy to visit several inquirers, and such as had found the Lord, desiring to be baptised. They were then all invited for the next Lord's Day to Belgern, a small town in which we have already two members, whom I baptised half a year ago. That Sunday we had a blessed conference, to which also the brethren from Torgan had arrived. After the forenoon service, in which I preached on the life and the death of Christ and the Christian, we held a church meeting, in which eight applicants were heard, of whom six, after the due examination and inquiry after their conversation, joyfully were

received for baptism. At four o'clock in the afternoon, one of the largest dancing-halls in the town was crowded with all sorts of people desiring to hear that strange "English missionary." The Lord graciously assisted me in preaching the depravity and lost state of man, the Godhead and incarnation, as well as the death and the love of Jesus Christ. After ten o'clock at night we went to the river Elbe to fulfil Christ's commandment concerning baptism. A great number of spectators were present, to whom I explained from Scripture the meaning of "these testimonies, and statutes, and judgments, which the Lord our God has commanded us." After this we went home, when the young disciples were received into membership and admitted to the Lord's supper, which was the end and the crown of our feast. The next day every one went his way again rejoicing.

Lord's Day, the 23rd, I was again in Halle, where I preached the doctrine of *Sanctification* (or the absolute necessity of a holy life as the result of regeneration), speaking, I., of its *nature:* it consisting in two things; 1st, in the putting off the old man; and, 2nd, in the putting on the new man—II., its *necessity:* it being, 1st, the will of God; 2nd, necessary to see the Lord; 3rd, implied in our calling —III., the *means* to sanctification: 1st, the Holy Spirit, and continued prayer for as well as to him; 2nd, the Word of God, and diligent use of it; 3rd, looking unto Jesus, and communion with him; 4th, a constant watching over ourselves. In the afternoon I taught the school, and in the evening service preached on Matt. vii. 13, 14.

Till next Lord's Day, having attended to several literary labours at home, I found myself in Altenburg, where we have about twelve young members, who are getting on very well, but need to be looked after and attended to.

Time would fail me to speak of some other journeys to new places, where partly I succeeded, and partly was sent back again. Let me only mention that our brethren in the kingdom of Saxony, some of whom I likewise visited, are still in the furnace of persecution. Two of our brethren went the last Sunday in July to an acquaintance in Chemritz, with whom they did sing a hymn, read a chapter, and prayed; when, in the afternoon, they repeated this prayer meeting, there came a policeman and took them to the station, where they were repeatedly tried, and kept till Tuesday evening. One of them was put in prison, where he was in the society of men somewhat like incarnate devils, who ceased not to curse and blaspheme as soon as the brother commenced to speak to them of Jesus and his gospel. The other brother had an old man as his companion, who with interest listened to the testimony of sin and redemption, and he, apparently, seemed to feel his sins and the power of the truth; he afterwards regarded it as a favour having been put into prison, because there the angel of the Lord had met him. The same two brethren have also been sentenced again to pay punishment for the continued distribution of tracts; and if they pay not before a certain day, their goods will again be confiscated. Oh, watchman, what of the night! is it soon spent? But, surely, the more fearful and the longer the night has been, the more joyful and glorious will be the morning of liberty, the day of Christ. And this day will surely come, for "the mouth of the Lord has spoken it."

Whilst the Lord has graciously granted success and commenced his kingdom, we still have to use both the trowel and the sword, and still have much occasion to pray "Let thy kingdom come, and soon rule over all." Will you, with all our dear friends, kindly help us in our supplication, and then you shall share in our victory, which is the Lord's, "unto whom be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end."

With the heartiest salutations to you and all our supporters.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

MORITZ GRISSLER.

Halle, 29th August, 1865.

CEYLON.

THE following is an extract from the report of the Ceylon Branch of

the Christian Vernacular Education Society. It shows very clearly the state of religious feeling in that island. We are indebted to the *Colombo Observer* for the extract:—

"The present condition of Ceylon is such as to demand the most vigorous efforts on the part of Christians; while, at the same time, the past affords many encouragements. For many years Missionaries had to complain of the deep apathy of the people. Doubtless this was fostered by belief in the doctrines of Buddhism. The Singhalese were content to gratify indolence in this birth, under the impression that merit might be secured in some of the future numberless stages of existence.

"Various causes have contributed to awaken the national mind. The opening up of the country by roads; the results produced by European enterprise, the spread of education, and the direct preaching of the gospel, have all coöperated in the different proportions. It may be said with truth that the Press has also had an important influence. The Word of God has been widely diffused. Tracts and other publications have been circulated in great numbers. Not long ago, Dr. Davis, of the Religious Tract Society, collected with care, lists of all the Christian tracts and books published in India and Ceylon during the previous ten years. The total number amounted to about 12 millions, of which about 1½ millions were printed in Singhalese. Compared with the population, the number issued in Ceylon was sixteenfold greater than in India.

"'The Evidences of Christianity,' by the late Rev. D. J. Gogerly, had a powerful effect in exciting religious inquiry among the Singhalese. The language and reasoning rendered the treatise better adapted to the more intelligent Buddhists; but the Rev. D. De Silva reproduced much of it in various tracts, admirably fitted for circulation among the masses. The Buddhists were so aroused, that with the aid of the King of Siam, they established a printing press at Galle to issue publications in defence of their system. The writings of Haslam and other infidels were consulted. It is a melancholy fact that the works of Bishop Colenso furnished many of the arguments by which it was sought to disprove the truth of the Bible. Answers to several of the tracts published by the 'Society for the Propagation of Buddhism' were issued by the committee of the Christian Vernacular Education Society, and by an able writer under the title of 'Wiswapria.' A periodical, called the 'Banner of Truth,' is also published by the Wesleyan Mission.

"The Rev. D. J. Gogerly was removed by death not long after the controversy commenced. In the good providence of God, he was succeeded by the Rev. R. S. Hardy, the author of the most complete treatise on Buddhism which has yet appeared. During his stay in the island, his profound knowledge of the subject has been turned to excellent account in a valuable work, 'The Sacred Books of the Buddhists compared with History of Modern Science.'

"The recent discussion at Baddegama, near Galle, shows the deep interest which is still felt in the Controversy. At no previous period in the history of the island has there been such a burst of religious feeling. It is, therefore, incumbent upon Christians to diffuse more widely than ever a knowledge of the 'name under Heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.'"

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS OF BRITISH AMERICA.

The aggregate population of the two Canadas, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Labrador, which provinces are expected to be for the present embraced in the new confederation, is, according to the last census, 3,295,706. Of these, the Roman Catholic number 1,465,979; the Church of England, 516,642; Presbyterians, 498,646; Methodists, 457,957; Baptists, 192,530; Lutherans, 29,651; Congregationalists, 18,104. It will be seen from these figures that the Roman Catholics constitute a much larger percentage of the aggregate population than in the United States; for while in that country they are only about one-seventh of the aggregate population, they are in British America more than two-fifths, and nearly three times as numerous as the largest of any other religious bodies.

THE CLAPTRAP PREACHER.

Few positions lead so directly to publicity, or satisfy so readily the craving to be seen, known, and talked of, as that of a popular divine. In all communities, rural or civic, the parson is a man of mark and importance. Even if he be a man of little ability—one who in any other walk of life would never be known or heard

of—here there is an adventitious deference and respect, which, due to the office, is in most minds transferred, apart from his own merits, to the man who occupies it. The squire receives him at his table; the bow obsequious of the smutched artificer, the wondering homage of children, await him as he goes forth on his parochial rounds; a general atmosphere of deference surrounds him, very pleasant to a weak mind, not unpleasant to a strong one. And, then, translate the youthful and ambitious minister from the modified publicity of the country parish to the unmeasured publicity and manifold excitements of a town charge, and is there not much, then, to feed the vanity and satisfy the love of display, or power, or praise, and so to present irresistible fascination to many a mind which higher motives would fail to move? Who, if he be accessible to such influences, is so much sought after, fêted, flattered, as the young and popular preacher? For whom do competing congregations contend, whose presence is so eagerly solicited by charitable societies, Sunday school managers, and churches that have a debt to clear off? Whose name is so eagerly coveted by getters-up of soirées and public meetings, and plastered on walls and boarding in big letters as a sure attraction to the hunters after religious amusement? Who wakes in susceptible breasts an admiration, the semi-sacredness of which blinds the subject of it to the human element that mingles with it, and to whom do tasteful gifts and presentations so often hint a homage which the tongue may not speak? Then think of the weekly excitement which the pulpit brings to him whose passion is for popular applause. The crowded pews, the thronged aisles, the preparatory fuss and commotion, and the stillness when the object of unusual interest appears; the half-impatience of psalms and prayers as mere preliminaries to the great point of interest; the hushed waiting stillness, the kindling eyes and flushed countenances, while the skilfully constructed climax is being wrought up, and sentence after sentence rising in interest, fall from the orator's lip; and then, as the goal is reached, and the exhausted speaker pauses, the long drawn sigh of relieved suspense, the interchanged glances of sympathetic admiration, the momentary rustle over the auditory, and then the settling of themselves for another dose of rhetorical excitement! What an ordeal is this for a weak head and a vain heart to go through! What incense rises on such a scene—a sweet odour in the nostrils of the too conscious idol of the hour! There is inherent weakness in such a ministry amidst the superficial flutter of success. The secret of the popularity hunter is sooner or later found out. Discerning minds perhaps see through his shallowness, pious minds fall back from one who lives for self, and the educated, supercilious, sceptical class, instead of being influenced by him, pride themselves on penetrating the claptrap of religious excitement, and find in the whole affair a fresh theme for disdainful criticism and epigrammatic articles on popular preaching.—*Dr. Caird, of Glasgow.*

AN UNFORTUNATE DILEMMA.

Some eminent Methodist divines are in trouble. They find it difficult to lay a solid foundation for infant baptism. As it cannot be found in the Bible, their efforts to supply the Scriptural deficiency occasions sore perplexity. Dr. Hibbard claims for it a divine authority on the ground of infant regeneration. As all infants are born again, through the merit of Christ's atoning work, they are entitled to baptism, like adults, after their renewal by the Spirit.

Dr. Nadal thinks this a dangerous doctrine. He can find no proof of it in the Bible, and little evidence of it in life. The baptised infants seem to need regeneration in later life quite as much as those unbaptised. He rejects, therefore, Dr. Hibbard's theory as multiplying difficulties instead of removing them. But his own is quite as unsatisfactory. He maintains that regeneration is not required, either for baptism or church membership. As believing and unbelieving Jews were mingled in the Jewish church, so may the unrenewed be brought together in the Christian church. Baptism and

church membership are to be regarded as means of grace, instead of signs of discipleship.

One error begets many. Simple obedience to Christ leads to all truth. If our troubled brethren will only lay aside infant baptism, as a corruption of the gospel order, their perplexity will vanish. They can then see that regeneration must precede baptism, as Philip said, "If thou believest *with all thy heart*, thou mayest," and that only those are regenerated who exhibit the change in a new life. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." A weak position is generally defended by bad logic."—*Watchman.*

MINISTERIAL CHANGE.

Bexley Heath. — The Rev. W. Frith has accepted an unanimous invitation to supply the pulpit for three months, in order to the pastorate, and commenced his labours on the 1st Lord's Day in September.

BAPTISMS.

Bramley.—September 3rd, six; by Mr. Ashworth.

Byrom-street, Liverpool.—August 30th, two; by the Rev. T. Durant, for the church meeting in the Brunswick-road.

Conlig, Newtownards, Ireland.—On Lord's Day, July 30th, the ordinance of baptism was administered by Mr. Brown. The candidate was previously connected with the Church of England.

MARRIAGE.

On the 6th September, at Bloomsbury Chapel, by the Rev. C. Woollacott, his grandson, Mr. Edward Woollacott, of New Malden, to Miss Appleton, of London.

DEATHS.

Died, at Newtownards, on the 27th August, Mrs. Cullough, in the 70th year of her age, for many years a member of the Baptist church at Conlig. She was a sincere Christian.

Mr James Webley, Baptist minister, Avening, Gloucestershire, was drowned whilst bathing in Langland Bay, near the Mumbles, on Saturday evening, September 16th.

RECEIVED FOR THE BAPTIST TRACT SOCIETY.

By Treasurer.		£	s.	d.
Mr. Consens, Buckhurst Hill	S.	0	10	0
Rev. E. Hewlett, London	S.	0	10	0
Collection at Buckhurst Hill		2	5	6
W. J. Haynes, Esq., London	S.	1	0	0
Mr. W. Pope, London	S.	1	1	0
Rev. W. Cooper, Hampstead	S.	0	10	0
By Mr. Whitehead.				
At Liverpool.				
Mr. G. Barker	D.	0	2	6
Mr. Robert Thornley	D.	0	2	6
Mr. J. Soul	D.	0	2	6
Mr. J. Marlow	D.	0	2	6
Mrs. Richards	D.	0	2	6
Mrs. John Williams	D.	0	2	6
Two Friends	D.	0	2	0
Friends at Cononley	D.	0	7	0
Mr. Robert Thomas	S.	0	5	0
Mr. A. Neilson	S.	0	5	0
Mr. William Fletcher	S.	0	5	0
Mr. William Greene	S.	0	5	0
Mr. Edwin Evans	S.	0	5	0
Miss E. R. Hammond	S.	0	5	0
Miss Rushton	S.	0	5	0
Captain J. S. Stowe	D.	0	10	0
Mr. John Cooke	D.	0	5	0
Mr. Thomas Mellor	D.	0	5	0
Dr. Thomas Simpson	D.	0	5	0
Mr. M. A. Davey	S.	0	2	6
Mrs. Winchester	D.	0	2	6
Mrs. Butcher	D.	0	2	6
Three Friends	D.	0	4	0
At Southport.				
Mr. J. Grosswell	S.	0	5	0
Dr. Craven	S.	0	5	0
Mr. B. L. Green	S.	0	5	0
Mrs. H. M. Henry	S.	0	5	0
Mr. J. J. Jefferson	D.	0	2	6
At Wigan.				
Mr. and Mrs. Hurst	D.	0	5	0
Mr. William Athan	D.	0	2	6
Mr. J. R. Nutter	D.	0	2	6
At Lancaster.				
Mr. T. Rotheram	D.	0	3	0
Three Friends	D.	0	6	0
At Tottlebank.				
Mrs. Jackson, Cartmel	D.	3	0	0
John Fell, Esq.	D.	1	0	0
Mrs. Muncaster	D.	0	5	0
Seven Friends, 2/6 each	D.	0	17	6
Four Friends (two 2/0, and two 1/0)	D.	0	6	0
At Coniston.				
Mr. J. Mason	D.	0	2	6
At Barrow.				
Mrs. Dawson	D.	0	5	0
Two Friends, 2/0 each	D.	0	5	0
Two Friends, 1/0 each	D.	0	2	0
At Manchester.				
James Burford, Esq.	D.	1	0	0
G. F. Fisher, Esq.	S.	1	0	0